

April 24, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump,

As our nation and our states continue to respond aggressively to COVID-19, we are increasingly concerned about the impact of COVID-19 on workers at food and poultry processing plants on the Delmarva Peninsula, and the customers, farmers and growers that depend on them.

The region's poultry industry is an important part of the nation's food supply chain, and is a critical part of our states' agricultural and economic landscapes, particularly in our more rural communities. Any disruption or interruption to processing at these poultry plants could lead to significant supply chain issues. Labor and processing shortages will also have an impact on consumers' ability to access healthy and safe food. At the same time, we have an obligation to protect the health and safety of the workers at these plants.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have been in constant contact with representatives of each of the five major poultry producers in the Delmarva region. Earlier this week, the Maryland Department of Health formed the regional Delmarva Poultry Production Task Force made up of state agencies and local health officials, affected communities, and members of the poultry industry. The task force is working to provide regional guidance for poultry plants designed to minimize risk to workers and surrounding communities. This will include guidelines for the companies, as well as outreach materials translated to the native languages of workers. While it is critical to implement healthy practices in the plants, many of the workers live in congregate housing where there is a high risk of community transmission.

As we continue to utilize all available resources at the local, state and regional level, we anticipate a need of additional federal support to fully ensure the safety of these communities and workers. Therefore, we request federal assistance in the following areas:

- Appoint one federal agency as the lead for any agricultural- and health-related issues related to COVID-19, particularly issues related to the health of workers in poultry processing plants. Federal agencies, including the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and

U.S. Department of Agriculture are invited to participate in the Delmarva Poultry Production Task Force and share their expertise and experience.

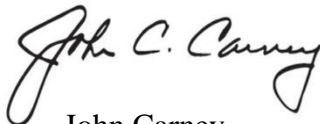
- Identify current or potential federal resources that may provide financial or other relief to affected companies, employees, farmers and growers.
- Provide necessary equipment, personnel, supplies and testing materials for workers in the region's agricultural, egg, livestock and poultry processing facilities. CDC epidemiological, clinical and related personnel teams could support state and local disease investigation, testing, guidance and monitoring on how to maintain this critical infrastructure.
- Release urgently needed national guidance from the CDC and OSHA to provide a national framework for the meatpacking and poultry processing industries.

A safe and stable food supply chain is essential to our nation's health, safety and well-being. As a nation and a region we need to ensure that these production resources can continue to operate safely with minimal to no disruption. We thank you for your consideration and look forward to working with your administration to reopen the economy as quickly and safely as possible.

Sincerely,



Larry Hogan
Governor
Maryland



John Carney
Governor
Delaware



Ralph Northam
Governor
Virginia

cc: Delaware, Maryland and Virginia Congressional Delegations
Sonny Perdue, Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture
Alex Azar, Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Robert R. Redfield, Director, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Loren Sweatt, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration